

Tonmoy Das
153-18 109th Ave.
Jamaica, NY 11433
September. 8th. 2020

Professor Sara Jacobson

160 Convent Ave

New York, NY 10031

Subject: The life and aspirations of a student

Dear Professor Jacobson:

I am a 20-year-old student currently enrolled in the Grove School of Engineering as a Civil Engineering major. I have been in the CUNY system for around 3 semesters including the current Fall 2020 semester and the Summer 2020 semester. Essentially I have taken around 1 full semester of classes in the CUNY system. Originally when I graduated from high school I had an aspiration for video games and still do. Following a logical path of reasoning, I decided to pursue a bachelor's in computer science. I was doing fairly well in my classes and enjoyed certain aspects of it. In my second semester, however, I grew tired of staring at a computer screen for hours at a time just to solve one tiny problem. This factor along with a variety of other issues with the environment led me to transfer out of NYIT into the CUNY system with a different major since most of the classes I had taken already overlapped with an engineering degree.

Civil Engineering may sound like a long shot from a cushy computer science career but they are very similar. In computer science, a person stares at a computer screen all day looking at the text, while in civil engineering there is more hands-on fieldwork intermittently along with staring at text on a computer screen all day. As I said earlier, very similar. In the civil engineering career field, there are many subcategories that I can enter into. At the moment I am filed as being multi-disciplinary but later on, when I feel more comfortable with the basics of the field I may pick a specific discipline to start. The workload for

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engineering seems large since most of the classes are technical and are heavily grounded in mathematics.

The reason that I chose a technical major in the first place whether it was computer science or engineering, it all stemmed from the high school that I attended.

The full name of the school I attended was called, “High School for Construction Trades, Engineering and Architecture”. In the school to enter you had to choose a field of either Construction, Engineering, or Architecture. I chose the engineering field and every year they had a specialized aspect as a class and at the end of the four years, we would take the State Nocti exam to gain credit. The four specializations we had to learn was, AutoCAD, digital electronics, mechanics, and an engineering documents class. In the AutoCAD class, we learned to use the program to design buildings as well as various other objects that were 3D printable. In the Digital Electronics class, we learned about the basics of electricity in circuits and worked with electronic components such as chips, wired, LED panels, and tools to modify them such as wire cutters, pliers, etc, the final project for this class involved soldering various components onto a circuit board creating a working digital screen. In the Mechanics class, we learned how various structures affected each other and how to manipulate them both physically and with code, in this class for the final project we created a variety of projects including a thermal engine, a catapult as well as a functioning model of an elevator. In the Engineering documents class, we wrote down all of our design notes in a proper format and created a functioning bridge at the end of the year with full documentation. Amongst these classes, in my final year, a newly opened AP Computer Science Principles class was opened and I attended for the credit at first. As the class progressed, I saw that it all came very easily towards me since I was very used to learning new things

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on the computer as well as already having a basic knowledge of all the concepts discussed in the class. Due to this confidence, I along with three other friends entered a 6-hour school hackathon and we won first place, designing a game to help people with depression. This victory was the primary reason that I entered the computer science field. Later when deciding what to change my major to I was conflicted. On one hand, I was good at using computer programs and coding while on the other hand, I didn't enjoy sitting around trying to solve one problem all day. So I compromised, I had friends in Architecture, Construction, and Engineering as well as good experience in all of these fields so I decided to enter civil engineering as it contained a good mix of all of these fields of study.

As for any engineering challenges that I would like to be involved in, there are none in particular. When I get assigned a task, I am able to complete that task often without fail or delay, however when it comes to completing tasks that I assign to myself it is difficult for me to start. This is on top of the fact that I don't have any giant aspirations of fame or power. Rather I wish to have a life with an average quality of life and the ability to accomplish any task that needs to be accomplished. Due to this reason I dislike focusing on myself as an individual and instead enjoy focusing on my accomplishments and abilities, because of that reason I will not be disclosed where my family origins in this letter and would prefer you to see me as one of many students rather than an individual needing focused attention.

Sincerely,

Tommy Das